

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK
GOVERNOR



MIKE COONEY
LT. GOVERNOR

October 17, 2019

Chair Ronna McDaniel
Republican National Committee
310 First Street SE
Washington, DC 20003

Dear Chair McDaniel,

I write to receive your assurances that the Republican National Committee (RNC) will cease and desist from issuing imitation Census surveys for its private fundraising purposes.

The stakes could not be higher for a complete and accurate count of Montana's residents during the 2020 Census. Like every state, Montana needs an accurate and complete count to ensure our citizens get a fair apportionment of funds to maintain our roads and infrastructure, resources to provide access to quality health care, and funds for healthy school lunches for Montana's schoolchildren, among other programs.

Against this backdrop, your organization is sending out fundraising documents that mimic official Census surveys. These imitation Census surveys are designed to confuse Montanans, and make them think they may need to respond and pay the suggested processing fee. We are gravely concerned that when the actual Census questionnaires are distributed, Montanans who had received RNC mailers may be under the impression that they have already responded to the Census, disregard the real Census survey, and lead to an undercount in Montana. An undercount has real, economic consequences for the lives of Montanans and should not be sacrificed for private fundraising.

The RNC sent these phony mailers during the last decennial Census and caused such concern among lawmakers that Congress passed a bipartisan measure to stop deceptive Census mailers. Still, the RNC designs and sends these Census mailers, which openly violate the spirit of the law, because "it performs so well."

An accurate Census count is too important to take lightly. There are some institutions in this country that must remain apolitical. Red and blue states alike equally count on having an accurate decennial Census, and anything that could degrade or discourage the ability to get a full and complete count must be stopped.

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I look forward to receiving your assurance that you will stop deceiving Montanans and retire the use of this fundraising gimmick.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Steve Bullock", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

STEVE BULLOCK
Governor